

Ngwenya calls for stronger partnership with traditional leaders to tackle Nkangala challenges



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Eight Mpumalanga municipalities are now implementing AARTO, changing how traffic offences and fines are handled as the province moves towards a more standardised administrative traffic enforcement system. Full Story on Page 3

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Ngwenya calls for stronger partnership with traditional leaders to tackle Nkangala challenges

● EMMANUEL N MTHIMUNYE

KWAMHLANGA – Nkangala District Municipality Executive Mayor Cllr Thomas Ngwenya has called for stronger cooperation between government and traditional leadership to address socio-economic and service delivery challenges facing communities across the district. Ngwenya delivered the keynote address during the Mayor's Annual Address to the Nkangala Local House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders at the KwaMhlanga Old Legislature on Friday, 14 August 2026. The gathering brought together traditional and Khoi-San leaders from across the district and provided a platform for the municipality to report on progress, outline key priorities and strengthen its working relationship with traditional leadership. The event was attended by senior traditional leaders, including Kgoshi Kgolo Lamek Mkwena, Chairperson of the Mpumalanga Provincial House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders, and Thembisile Hani Local Municipality Executive Mayor Cllr Liseja Dikgale. In his address, Ngwenya said the gathering provided an opportunity for the district municipality to account for progress made since the 2021 local government elections and report back on priorities identified at the beginning of the current term. Water remained one of the key priorities, with Ngwenya also highlighting crime, unemployment, illegal immigration, illegal occupation of land and gender-based violence as some of the pressing challenges facing communities across Nkangala. He stressed that addressing these challenges requires cooperation between government and traditional leaders, who

play an important role in communities and local development. Ngwenya also highlighted efforts by the district municipality to address unemployment through support for small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs). He said the municipality had set aside funding to support SMMEs and create opportunities for self-employment, with beneficiaries who applied through their local municipalities receiving working tools and equipment to help establish or grow their businesses. The Mayor cited recent support provided to beneficiaries in Thembisile Hani, including mobile toilets for hire and catering equipment, as examples of interventions aimed at enabling residents to generate income and reduce unemployment. The annual address also provided traditional leadership with an opportunity to engage with the district's development priorities and interventions, reinforcing the role of traditional leaders in addressing challenges affecting their communities. The district municipality reaffirmed its commitment to working closely with the House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders in implementing solutions aimed at improving the lives of residents. The formal programme was followed by a Gala Lunch celebrating Nkangala's cultural heritage. The KwaMhlanga Old Legislature came alive with performances by brass group uJali namaDodana and dance troupe Letlabile, while renowned

cultural icon Dr Nothembi Mkhwebane took to the stage in traditional regalia, song and dance. The gathering brought government

and traditional leadership together not only to reflect on challenges facing the district, but also to celebrate the culture and heritage of Nkangala's communities.



ANC instructs eMalahleni mayor to remove two MMCs

● LUCAS SHONGWE

EMALAHLENI – The ANC in Nkangala has confirmed that it instructed eMalahleni Mayor Vusi Nhlapo to remove two members of his Mayoral Committee on Tuesday, 11 August 2026, citing poor performance and alleged links to the Service Delivery Party (SDP). Former MMC for Waste and Environment Betty Maphosa and former MMC for Community Services Sizwe Buthelezi were removed with immediate effect following what Nhlapo described as formal consultations. Nhlapo said the changes were aimed at improving municipal performance and accelerating service delivery. “This decision is about accelerating service delivery, strengthening oversight, and ensuring the municipality implements the IDP and service delivery programmes with urgency and effectiveness,” he said. Lucky Tolo has been appointed MMC for Community Services, while Nombuso Mokwana moved from Development Planning and Spatial Planning to Waste and Environment. Thembi Shabalala has been appointed MMC for Development Planning and Spatial Planning. ANC Nkangala Regional Secretary Sello Matshoga said the party was briefed about the reasons for the reshuffle about two months ago before instructing the mayor to act. Matshoga said Buthelezi's removal was linked to his conduct towards the ANC and council after he lost the Ward 16 councillor candidate nomination process. “We were reliably informed that he started working with the SDP, and we have since confirmed that information. We can confirm that he is no longer a member of the ANC and we are in the process of submitting a letter of withdrawal to the IEC,” Matshoga said. He said Maphosa was removed for poor performance, alleging that she was often late for caucus meetings and absent from council meetings. Buthelezi denied the allegations and accused the ANC regional leadership of interfering in the municipality. “I have always been vocal and refused to be coerced into making the wrong decisions such as

employing directors with criminal cases,” he said. He also alleged that businesspeople were instructed to provide money for alcohol to influence voters during the Ward 16 nomination process. Buthelezi confirmed that he had joined the SDP, saying his ANC membership expires on 18 August 2026. “I decided to join the SDP because I know my membership will not be renewed. After repeatedly trying to raise these issues within the ANC and being sidelined, ignored and pushed to the edge, I realised they no longer want me,” he said. Maphosa, who is also Ward 31 councillor, rejected Matshoga's allegations, saying her removal was based on unproven claims that she was supporting an SDP councillor candidate in Phola. “I received a call from one of my political superiors, three days before the reshuffle, saying that the ANC is concerned that I was mobilising support for an SDP councillor candidate in Phola. They could not prove those rumours to be true,” she said. Maphosa denied being an SDP member and said her absences from council meetings were due to official duties, sick leave or family responsibility leave. The SDP confirmed Buthelezi as a member, with national organiser Ncobile “Bullet Mkabayi” Mazibuko saying the party expected more ANC members to join, but could not confirm whether Maphosa had joined the party. The new Mayoral Committee comprises Hessie Maseko for Corporate Services, Thabang Mathebula for Technical Services, Nombuso Mokwana for Waste and Environment, Thembi Shabalala for Development Planning and Spatial Planning, Lucky Tolo for Community Services and Faith Khumalo for Finance.



Former MMC for Community Services Sizwe Buthelezi

“the path of the righteous winds upwards to flee from hell beneath us” Prov 15:24



Chasing the Wind

By Pastor Chuck Swindoll

I devoted myself to search for understanding and to explore by wisdom everything being done under heaven. I soon discovered that God has dealt a tragic existence to the human race. I observed everything going on under the sun, and really, it is all meaningless—like chasing the wind. (Ecclesiastes 1:13–14) As we learned previously, many years ago there lived a king who decided he would write in a journal what he had discovered about life. His father, David, had left a rather large estate in his care. His father had fought the battles and now the son Solomon enjoyed peace—forty years of it. Imagine! He ruled four decades over a nation free of war. Instead of money being poured into the war machine, peacetime money was available . . . and Solomon used it to finance his pursuits to discover life. One day, after the pursuit was over and done with, he sat down and wrote in his journal the truth about all he had discovered. There's not one lie in his book. I should warn you, however, it is not your basic Here's How to Be Rich and Famous volume. But it is

trustworthy information all the world needs to read. The king's journal, as we have seen, has one basic premise. He doesn't make us wait until the end of the book to read it. He says it right at the beginning. “Vanity of vanities,” says the speaker. “Vanity of vanities! All is vanity.” In Hebrew literature, when the same word is repeated even once, it is for the purpose of emphasis. It is like our exclamation point. It is as though Solomon wants to declare the superlative, “Super vain! Completely empty! Nothing to it!” Or, in today's terms, “Apathy rules!” A couple of ideas emerge from the lines of Solomon's journal: 1. If there is nothing but nothing under the sun, our only hope must be above it. Are you willing to go that far with me? If there's nothing but nothing under the sun, then our source of hope must be beyond it. 2. If a man who had everything investigated everything visible, then the one thing needed must be invisible. Can you agree with that? Solomon explored every visible realm of stimulation yet found no satisfaction. It seems only logical that the satisfaction he searched for will come only from that which is invisible. Do you realize how few people really see the invisible? The only way you will find satisfaction is in believing the invisible. It's in trusting the inaudible. His name is Jesus Christ. He wants to rule your life. Why should apathy rule if He is available?

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AARTO takes effect in Steve Tshwete, eMalahleni and Thembisile Hani

Eight Mpumalanga municipalities are now implementing AARTO, changing how traffic offences and fines are handled as the province moves towards a more standardised administrative traffic enforcement system.

RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

MPUMALANGA – Motorists in eight municipal areas across Mpumalanga are now subject to the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences Act (AARTO), following the start of Phase 2 of the national rollout on 1 July 2026. The implementation covers the City of Mbombela, Nkomazi, Thaba Chweu, Steve Tshwete, eMalahleni, Thembisile Hani, Govan Mbeki and Lekwa. The Mpumalanga Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison said traffic authorities in the affected areas will now issue AARTO infringement notices for applicable traffic offences instead of Section 56 or Section 341 notices issued under the Criminal Procedure Act. “With this implementation, traffic authorities in these areas will no longer issue Section 56 or Section 341 notices to offending motorists in terms of the Criminal Procedure Act. Only infringement notices issued in terms of AARTO will be used,” the department said. However, motorists who received Section 56 or Section 341 notices before 1 July 2026 remain responsible for settling those outstanding notices. AARTO was enacted in 1998 with the aim of improving road safety and reducing fatal crashes on South African roads. The system is administered by the Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA), an entity of the National Department of Transport. According to the department, the eight

Mpumalanga municipal areas form part of Phase 2 of the national rollout, covering 62 municipalities. The rollout follows earlier pilot implementations in the City of Tshwane and City of Johannesburg. Motorists who receive an AARTO infringement notice have 32 days to respond. During this period, they may pay the penalty and qualify for a 50% discount, nominate the driver who was in control of the vehicle, apply for instalment payments where the penalty is R750 or more, or lodge an appeal with the Appeals Tribunal. The department warned that motorists who fail to respond within the initial 32 days will receive a courtesy letter, lose the 50% discount and incur additional administrative fees. “Should a motorist fail to respond within 32 days, a courtesy letter will be issued and the 50% discount will be forfeited. Additional administrative fees will also apply,” the department said. Motorists will then have a further 32 days to respond to the courtesy letter, after which failure to respond may result in an enforcement order. The department said motorists who fail to settle infringement penalties within the prescribed periods may also face restrictions on certain vehicle and licence transactions, including renewing driving or motor vehicle licences and registering new vehicles. Motorists requiring further information can contact the RTIA Communications Office on 082 575 3976 or 083 305 5212.

New toilets, water systems bring relief to Victor Khanye residents

RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

DELMAS – Residents of Mimosa informal settlement in Eloff are receiving improved access to sanitation and water following the handover of 100 completed low-flush household sanitation systems as part of a broader intervention in Victor Khanye Local Municipality. The sanitation systems were handed over during a ministerial visit led by Water and Sanitation Minister Pemmy Majodina. The intervention, implemented through the Rand Water Foundation, prioritises vulnerable households, including women, the elderly, child-headed households and people with disabilities. For Sindiswa Nkala of Mimosa Township, receiving a proper toilet means more than improved sanitation. She said it would restore her dignity and improve her quality of life. “God is always present at all times. I am grateful for the help I have received and for those who came to my assistance. I am deeply thankful that Rand Water is bringing a toilet to my home. This means so much to me and will restore my dignity. Thank you very much,” Nkala told Highveld Chronicle. The sanitation handover forms part of a wider intervention aimed at improving access to basic

services in communities facing socio-economic challenges. Victor Khanye Executive Mayor Vusi Buda welcomed the support from Rand Water and the Rand Water Foundation, saying the projects would make a meaningful difference to residents affected by unemployment and the decline of industries that have historically supported the local economy. Buda said the municipality appreciated the investment in local communities and the focus on the most vulnerable residents. Majodina said access to water and sanitation was fundamental to development and human dignity, particularly for women, who often carry the greatest burden when communities lack reliable water supplies. “Women often bear the greatest burden when communities lack reliable access to water. Water is a catalyst for development, and sustainable human settlements cannot be built without adequate water and sanitation services,” Majodina said. The Minister also officially handed over decentralised water supply systems at Brakfontein and Savanna

Ward 7 as part of Phase 1 of the intervention. At Brakfontein, an equipped decentralised water treatment system, together with storage facilities and communal taps, is expected to benefit about 200 people, while the system in Savanna Ward 7 will provide water to about 250 community members. According to the Rand Water Foundation, 270 low-flush sanitation systems were completed during the 2025/26 financial year, benefiting about 500 residents, including 140 women-headed households. The intervention has also created local employment opportunities and supported small, medium and micro enterprises. For residents such as Nkala, the projects represent more than new infrastructure, providing access to basic services while restoring dignity to households that have faced long-standing sanitation and water challenges.



VKLM Executive Mayor Vusi Buda, Mpumalanga MEC for Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs Speedy Mashilo, and Water and Sanitation Minister Pemmy Majodina during the handover of water and sanitation projects in Mimosa informal settlement

CALLING FOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS PREMIER’S YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND 2026/27-2027/28

The Office of the Premier of Mpumalanga is calling for funding applications from interested young entrepreneurs to apply for 2026/27 - 2027/28 Premier's Youth Development Fund (PYDF). The fund is aimed at assisting deserving young people aged 18-35 years to kick-start and grow their business ventures.

Potential candidates should ensure that their application is in a form of a **SOUND BUSINESS PLAN** accompanied by the following returnable documents:

- » Certified ID copy
- » Curriculum Vitae
- » Proof of Residence (certified)
- » Company Registration Documents (100% Youth-Owned)
- » Valid SARS Tax Pin
- » BEE certificate (CIPC or Sworn Affidavit)
- » Proof of active business account
- » Proof of market / offtake agreements

Applications should be submitted in the **2026 PYDF Application Form**, which is accessible on www.mpg.gov.za

Enquiries should be directed to Mr. SA Dhlamini: 013 766 2006 or Ms. RV Zwane 013 766 2005
NB: faxed or emailed applications will not be accepted.

Beneficiaries of the PYDF are not encouraged to apply.

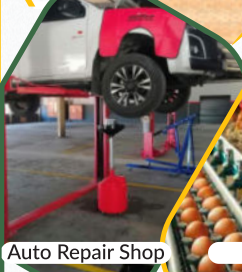
Please forward your application to:
The Deputy Director – Youth Development, for the attention of Mr SB Ntandane,
Private Bag X11291, Mbombela, 1200.

Physical Address: Office of the Premier, Makhonjwa Building, First Floor, Riverside Park, Government Boulevard, Mbombela

Closing Date: **Friday, 28 August 2026 at 16h00**
If no correspondence is received within six months after the closing date, applicants must accept that their applications have been unsuccessful.



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EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE SUPPLY DELIVERY INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF AIR CONDITIONERS AT LEEUWPAN MINE

Exxaro Coal (PTY) LTD, company registration no 2000/011078/07, is a private company registered in terms of the Company Laws o f the Republic of South Africa and looking for suppliers to provide a service of supply delivery installation and maintenance of air conditioners at Exxaro Leeuwpan Coal Mine.

You are hereby invited to express your interest by registering on the Exxaro Coupa Supplier Portal which is a self-service registration process using <https://exxaro.microsoftcrmportals.com/Account/Login/Register?returnUrl=%2F> and follow the instructions below:

REFERENCE Nr.	LP_Engineering_Sourcing Request_239393
NAME OF BU:	EXXARO LEEUWPAN COAL MINE
DESCRIPTION OF ENQUIRY:	Supply delivery installation and maintenance of split units air conditioners
ACTION REQUIRED FROM RESPONDENTS:	1) All interested parties should follow the following instructions: a) For new suppliers, register their company as a prospective supplier using the link below and the Reference Number indicated above: https://www.exxaro.com/suppliers#Prospective-Supplier b) Existing suppliers do not complete point (a), instead, please include your current vendor number in an email as per the point 2 below. 2) Send an email to SCMOPENRFI@exxaro.com with the following information: For existing registered suppliers: please only send the requested information and provide you vendor number. Your company profile, Latest valid BBBEE Certificate, CIPC Company Registration Document NB: Emails sent to SCMOPENRFI@exxaro.com must include the reference number indicated above as the Email Subject.
DUE DATE & TIME:	Friday, 21 August 2026, Time: 14:00
CONTACT PERSON:	maxwell.mbatha@exxaro.com

SUMMARY OF SCOPE OF WORK

SCOPE OF WORK

The Contractor shall be responsible for the supply, repair and maintenance of the split unit air conditioners at Leeuwpan mine. The service shall cover the complete mine area including the clinic and Potgieter farm.

1. SUPPLY OF NEW AIR CONDITIONER UNITS

The Contractor shall be required to:

- 1.1Supply, deliver, and install new air conditioners as and when requested by the end user.
- 1.2The units shall be supplied with all the necessary documentation, manuals etc.
- 1.3Only brand-new units shall be supplied, no second hand units will be accepted.

2. REPAIR OF THE AIR CONDITIONERS

- 2.1In the event that the air conditioner requires repairs, the service provider shall inform the end user and arrangement be made for the unit to be repaired.
- 2.2Only new spares shall be use to repair the units, no second hand spares shall be used during the repair process
- 2.3Proof of new parts shall be submitted to the mine official

3. SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE OF AIR CONDITIONERS

The servicing and maintenance shall include but not limited to the following

- 3.1Service will be performed as per regulations set by SAQCC & SARACCA

Deliverables

- 3.2Service completion report shall be submitted to the end user per unit serviced
- 3.3Before and after service photos
- 3.4Service sticker on each unit, including service date and next service date.

Service Frequency

- 3.5The units shall be serviced every 6 months for units that are in a dust free area, like the main offices. The units that are in a dust area like the plant offices the interval shall be quarterly.
- 3.6 All work must be done by SARACCA or SAQCC certified technicians.

4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- The service provider shall have all the necessary tools and equipment to execute the work, the mine shall not assist with any tools or equipment. Any tools and/or equipment brought to the mine shall be inspected before use and shall comply to the mine standards and requirements, this is to ensure safety.
- The service provider shall comply to all relevant Leeuwpan mine procedures
- The service provider shall ensure its stuff is fully trained and competent to execute this work, this will include mine inductions, medicals etc.
- The service provider shall provide PPE to their workforce, the mine will not provide any protective equipment. The PPE shall comply with the mine standard and shall be approved by the mine hygienist.
- The service provider shall report to the responsible supervisor before starting with any work.

ONCE ALL INTERESTED PARTIES HAVE REGISTERED ON THE EXXARO COUPA SUPPLIER PORTAL AS PER THE ABOVE INSTRUCTION BY FRIDAY, 21 August 2026, Time: 14:00, A FORMAL REQUEST FOR QUOTES WILL BE ISSUED TO THOSE THAT HAVE REGISTERED VIA THE PORTAL.

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Our Story

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Umtloli: Emmmanuel N Mthimunye

Njengoba uSodorobha kamaspala wesiyingi se Nkangala uThomasa Ngwenya beka thula ikulumo yakhe yaqobe mnyaka yoku hlangela namakhosi kanye nobu rholi bendabuko, ngehloso yoku 8letha ituthuko noku tjala ekutheni kuthuthuke ubukhosi noburholi bendabuko

Lembizo le ibe igade ikhanjelwe ziintatanyiswa ezifana no Dr Nothembi Mkhwebane onguma kekere emvumeni wesindebele, bekukhona u Professor Thuthukile Kabini we Gadunga S'gadange odlala indima ekulu khulu ekubutheleleni isimilo sabentwana abasakhulako ngokuba fundisa ukuzi phatha kanye nokwazi imvelaphi yabo nokwazi ngobu rhwari, nje ngama tlawana, malija nabesegwabo.

Lembizo ibe igade ihlangelwe makhosi ngokuhluka kwawo, begade kukhona ubukhosi bakwa Manala Makerana udoswa phambili ngu Ndabezitha I kosi uMoses Sonkalana Mabena, begade kukhona ubukhosi, bakwa Ndzunza Sompalane,

Kanye nos'hlalo we komidi ebeyigade zekambiso yengoma uNdabezitha uNtsizwa Mahlangu, beku gade kukhona no Sekela S'hlalo wendlu yamakhosi kanye naba rholi bendabuko

umma u Kgoshigadi Maluka ngaphasi kobukhosi ba, Bakgatla baMaluka.

Begade kukhona neeMbongi ngokuhluka kwazo zindlegana, ngibala u Elmon Pondo Mahlikihla, uThulari Sibanyoni kazi namaduna wamakhosi ngokuhluka kwazo

Bekugade kukhona iinqhema zesintu mgokuhluka kwazo njenge sqhema uJali namadodana, beku khona isiqhema somhlobo wama Tswana.

Kazi noNduna kulu walokha weMpumalanga uNdaweni Johannes Mahlangu.

Imbizo le ibe igade idoswa phambili ngu Ndabezitha uSiphosezwe Mahlangu ongu S'hlalo we Nkangala Local House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders

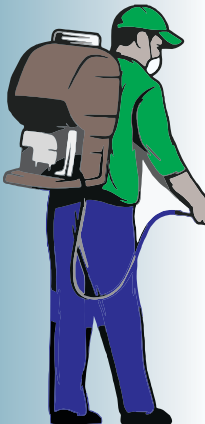
Ihloso yembizo le bekuku qinisa nokwakha ubudlelwano ubunzinzileko phakathi kuka rhulumende kanye namakhosi, naba rholi bendabuko. Lokhu kuyindlela yoku buyisa isimilo nes'thunzi sama khosi naba rholi bendabuko khulu kazi noku tjala emahlwelweni womnotho netuthuko eMpumalanga yokana



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EXTERNAL VACANCY

14 August 2026

Vacant Positions:	Closing Date
COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER (CLO)	21/08/2026
Liberty Coal - Optimum Colliery	Time: 23:59

Vacancy Overview:

Applications are hereby invited from suitably qualified candidates residing within the Pullenshope community for the position of Community Liaison Officer (CLO). The successful candidate will serve as a link between the company and the local community regarding housing-related matters and blasting concerns affecting the community.

Roles & Responsibilities

- Facilitate communication between the company and the community regarding housing and blasting matters
- Assist community members with housing and blasting-related queries and concerns
- Coordinate meetings relating to housing and blasting matters where required
- Maintain professional relationships with community members regarding housing and blasting concerns
- Assist in resolving community complaints related to blasting and housing issues

Qualification Criteria, Knowledge & Competencies

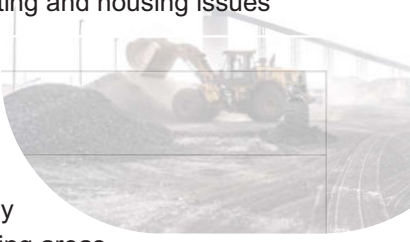
- Grade 12 / Matric
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Computer literacy will be advantageous
- Ability to engage with community members professionally
- Knowledge of the Pullenshope community and surrounding areas
- Previous community liaison experience will be advantageous
- Must be a resident of the Pullenshope community

How to Apply

Interested candidates are requested to submit the following:

- Detailed CV
- Certified copy of ID
- Certified copy of qualifications
- Proof of residence

Applications must be submitted to: jobs@liberty-coal.com



How Mercy Ndhlovu turned a childhood hobby into Nunuka Made

NODICAH FUNDAMA

KWAMHLANGA – When Mercy Ndhlovu found her grandmother's old knitting needles during the COVID-19 lockdown, she never imagined they would help shape a new future. Today, the KwaMhlanga entrepreneur is the founder of Nunuka Made, a handcrafted crochet business whose products have found homes across South Africa and in countries including Australia and Germany. Born and raised in Miliva, KwaMhlanga, Ndhlovu says her values were shaped by the hardworking women in her family. “I come from women who always found ways to provide for their families while making the most of the gift of life. Watching them taught me that no matter what challenges come your way, you keep finding solutions.” Before becoming an entrepreneur, Ndhlovu worked as a professional travel consultant, while crochet remained a childhood hobby. That changed when the COVID-19 pandemic brought the tourism industry to a standstill. At home, she found her grandmother's knitting needles and wool, reminding her of school holidays when her grandmother taught her and her siblings

crochet, grass mat weaving and other traditional skills. She began learning new techniques online, experimenting with T-yarn and incorporating African influences into contemporary designs. The name Nunuka carries a personal connection. It was a childhood nickname given to her by her mother and is still used by her grandmother. “It may not have a dictionary meaning, but it carries family, love and memories.” What began with bags for family and friends soon attracted paying customers. Today, Nunuka Made supplies handcrafted products across South Africa, with international buyers discovering the brand through exhibitions. The business has reached several milestones, exhibiting at the KwaMhlanga Street Market in 2023, Ditsong Heritage Museum in 2024, Africa's Travel Indaba in Durban in 2025 and Decorex Africa in 2026. Her work has also appeared on fashion runways through collaborations during MFR shows, while a partnership with LucMo Wines has produced handmade wine holders attracting

international interest. Ndhlovu now wants to expand production and create employment. “I want to reach a stage where I can employ people and produce on a larger scale.” Beyond business, she has introduced young people at the Phumula Skills Development Centre to crochet and hopes to establish a foundation teaching girls practical skills such as crochet and knitting. Her Ndebele-inspired patterns also allow her to celebrate her heritage. “When someone carries one of my bags, they are carrying part of our culture.” Ndhlovu credits Margaret Mahlangu, Lucia Motloung and fellow entrepreneur Josephine Komane for



helping and supporting her entrepreneurial journey. She believes locally made products can strengthen Mpumalanga's tourism industry by offering visitors authentic alternatives to mass-produced souvenirs. For women pursuing their dreams, her

message is one of confidence and perseverance. “Our future is in our hands. We hold our roots. Never underestimate the gift you carry, because it could become the opportunity that changes not only your life, but the lives of others.”



R20-million Newtown library opens to boost skills and job prospects

LUCAS SHONGWE

MIDDELBURG – Young people in Mhluzi and surrounding communities now have greater access to books, computers and free internet following the official opening of the R20-million Newtown Community Library in Ward 17 on Friday, 14 August 2026. The facility was opened by Mpumalanga MEC for Culture, Sport and Recreation Leah Mabuza, who urged residents, particularly young people, to use the library to develop their skills, access information and improve their employment prospects. “This is your library. We invite young people to come and use the free computers, internet and Wi-Fi to search for government information, apply for jobs online, and explore innovation,” Mabuza said. She said the library would help address unemployment while improving digital literacy in Mhluzi and across Steve Tshwete Local Municipality. Mabuza added that all new provincial libraries are required to have 24-hour internet connectivity to ensure learners without smartphones or reliable internet access are not left behind. The Newtown Community Library is the 14th library to be built in Steve Tshwete and forms part of the provincial government's efforts to expand access to information and digital resources.

Construction began in November 2021 and created 186 jobs for local residents. Designed with accessibility and inclusion in mind, the facility features ramps and easy-access entrances, while its mini-lab is equipped with assistive technology, including screen readers for visually impaired users. In addition to book lending, the library provides study areas, free internet, research assistance, copying and printing services. It will also host children's storytelling programmes, book clubs, community events and workshops on digital literacy and job readiness. Ruth Phasha from the National Department of Sport, Arts and Culture said public libraries play an important role in the

educational, social and economic development of communities. “We believe in the ability of public libraries to provide information services that drive the educational, social, and economic development of communities. I have no doubt that the people of this community will be enriched by this new facility,” Phasha said. Grade 9 learner Ntombikayise Skhosana welcomed the facility, saying it would save learners travelling costs and provide easier access to educational resources. “It's a big relief. I used to walk far to other libraries. Now learners like me can improve our reading and vocabulary with the books here. My parents will also save on transport and data because the library is a walking distance from where I stay and offers free Wi-Fi,” she said.



Mpumalanga MEC for Culture, Sport and Recreation Leah Mabuza and Steve Tshwete Local Municipality Executive Mayor Mhlonishwa Masilela unveil the plaque marking the official opening of the Newtown Public Library in Middelburg

Steam returns as Liberty Coal powers the Great Train Race

LUCAS SHONGWE

MIDDELBURG – The return of the iconic Katryn Class 12F 3117 steam locomotive to the Great Train Race (GTR) for Charity on Saturday, 8 August 2026, brought a piece of Middelburg's industrial heritage back to the tracks after more than a decade. The locomotive's return was made possible by coal supplied by Liberty Coal, the main sponsor of this year's race, linking the region's mining heritage with an event centred on sport, charity and community. For Liberty Coal, the sponsorship went beyond branding and provided an opportunity to help restore a much-loved part of the race's identity. “The return of the steam locomotive is more than a celebration of a bygone era; it is a powerful reminder of where our community comes from and what we can achieve when we come together,” Liberty Coal Head of Communications Mpumelelo Mashifane said. “For Liberty Coal, it was particularly meaningful to play a role in bringing this iconic piece of our industrial heritage back to the Great Train Race by supplying the coal that powered its journey to Middelburg. As a company deeply rooted in the region, we are proud to support an event that brings together sport, charity, heritage and community.” The locomotive travelled from Pretoria to Middelburg using coal

supplied by Liberty Coal, with the company also securing exclusive branding rights on its tender. More than 200 Liberty Coal employees participated in the 24,7km race, 11,3km race, 4,9km fun run and 10km team relay, while another team assisted with logistics and event coordination. The company also made its mark on the results, with its athletes claiming first and second place in the men's race and delivering a strong performance in the relay. Their participation reflected Liberty Coal's focus on employee wellness and its association with the Nkangala Athletics Academy, which assisted the company in preparing a competitive team. “Our employees' participation and their outstanding performance on the day made our maiden involvement even more special. We are proud to have been part of an occasion that put the 'Great' back into the Great Train Race,” Mashifane said. The steam locomotive became a major attraction at an event that drew more than 5,000 entrants, while more than 10,000 people attended the wider festivities at the Steve Tshwete Municipal Showgrounds. For Liberty Coal, its first year as the GTR's main sponsor brought together community sport, charity, employee wellness and the region's industrial heritage, with the return of steam providing a fitting connection to its roots in coal.



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NkAMA road to September finale gathers pace in Victor Khanye

● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

DELMAS – The road to the Nkangala Arts and Music Awards (NkAMA) September finale gained momentum in Victor Khanye Local Municipality on 9 and 10 August, as the district-wide activation brought businesses, community teams and residents together for two days of sporting action in Delmas.

The Victor Khanye activation was the fourth of six district-wide events aimed at celebrating and promoting talent in music, art, dance, poetry and sport across Nkangala's six local municipalities.

The quarter-final action began at Mandela Sports Ground on Sunday, with Mbuyelo Manungu Colliery making an early statement by defeating Sephaku Cement 8-2.

Meadow Feeds then defeated Ritluka Mining 4-3 on penalties after their match

ended 1-1, while Trollope Mining secured their place in the semi-finals following the disqualification of McCain Foods for failure to comply with tournament rules.

In another quarter-final clash, CJ Distribution secured a convincing 2-0 victory over Victor Khanye Local Municipality (VKLM) to book their place in the semi-finals. Mbuyelo Manungu Colliery edged CJ Distribution 5-4 on penalties after a 1-1 semi-final draw, while Trollope Mining beat Meadow Feeds 1-0 to reach the final.

Mbuyelo then defeated Trollope 1-0 to be crowned the Victor Khanye NkAMA soccer champions.

The activation also featured netball, where Ecovillage

Multipurpose produced a dominant performance to defeat Masekeni 78-20 in the final and claim the Victor Khanye title.

Beyond the sporting competition, the activation provided an opportunity for communities to come together and celebrate local talent, supporting NkAMA's broader objective of creating opportunities for creatives and strengthening community pride.

NkAMA was officially launched on 7 July 2026 by the Nkangala District Municipality and Highveld Chronicle as a platform to celebrate the district's creative and sporting talent.

Speaking at the launch, Nkangala District Municipality Executive Mayor Thomas Ngwenya highlighted the important role artists play in society.

“Artists are historians, teachers, healers, social commentators and nation builders.”

The remaining activations will be held in Steve Tshwete on 16 & 17 August and eMakhazeni on 23 & 24 August,

bringing the district-wide programme to a close ahead of the main event.

The campaign will culminate in the NkAMA Gala Dinner on 11 September 2026, followed by the NkAMA Awards Ceremony on 12 September, where outstanding artists, musicians, dancers, poets and other creatives from across Nkangala will be The September programme will feature performances by Sjava, Bathabile Skhosana, Mami,

Undzundza, King Talkzin, Lannie Billion, Idols SA winner Zama and NkAMA Newcomer Artist Londiwe Sibanyoni, with additional performers expected to be announced.

With the final two activations still to come, anticipation continues to build across the district as NkAMA brings communities together through sport, entertainment and the celebration of local talent.



Soccer Champions, Mbuyelo Manungu Colliery



Netball Champions, Ecovillage Multipurpose

From pencil lines to hyperrealism: 18-year-old artist draws his way towards a creative future

● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

MATHYZENLOOP – A sheet of paper and a handful of pencils have become the tools through which 18-year-old Lizwilezwe Mahlangu is building his future. What began as a childhood ability to sketch has grown into a serious pursuit of hyperrealism, with the young artist now turning portraits into commissioned work.

Born and raised in Mathyzensloop in Thembisile Hani, Mahlangu rediscovered his passion for sketching while in Grade 10 in 2023 after coming across the work of Ngcebo's Art on Facebook.

“I remembered that when I was young, around six or seven years old, I was able to create sketches. But at that time, I did not have a passion for sketching,” he says.

Mahlangu describes himself as a sketch artist working within fine art, with portraits at the centre of his work. His style is influenced by hyperrealism, with an emphasis on capturing fine details and creating realistic representations of his subjects.

Without formal artistic training, he has developed his skills through practice, observation and mentorship. His mentor, Zein Mahlangu, has played an important role in his development, while Artin Martin Sefako and Spheisihle Hlatjwayo are among the artists who inspire him.

“I am very passionate about my artwork and stubborn when it comes to working on portraits that give me challenges. I always want my work to look exactly like I imagined it,” he says.

His creative process begins with the basic structure before he builds the image using graphite and charcoal pencils and a Mono Zero eraser to

refine the shading.

His portfolio includes an A1-sized portrait of Mineral and Energy Resources Minister Gwede Mantashe and a detailed portrait of DJ Black Coffee, which Mahlangu hopes will one day be displayed in the internationally acclaimed artist's home.

His passion is also developing into an income-generating business, with commissioned artworks ranging from R600 for an A4 portrait to R10,000 for an A0 piece.

However, his journey has not been without challenges. Limited access to a cellphone, money and art materials has at times made it difficult to grow his work, while some customers have struggled to pay for commissioned pieces.

A major breakthrough came when Mahlangu attended the All White Picnic with his mentor, where his

artwork was sold to celebrities including Leemckrazy, Mafikizolo and Masterpiece.

The experience strengthened his belief that art can become a sustainable career. He has since mentored aspiring artists and hopes to encourage more young people to view art as a profession.

“I want to empower young people to take it as a job, not a hobby,” he says. His long-term goal is to establish an art gallery or creative space where he can exhibit his work and teach aspiring artists.

“Perfection takes time,” Mahlangu says. For now, he continues building towards that dream one line, one shade and one portrait at a time.



NkAMA

Nkangala Arts & Music Awards

NKANGALA NETBALL & SOCCER

ACTIVATION EVENT

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WILL BE LEFT BEHIND

GAMES DATES:

11 JUL - THEMBISILE HANI LM | 25 JUL - DR JS MOROKA LM | 02 AUG - EMALAHLENI LM
09 AUG - VICTOR KHANYE LM | 16 AUG - STEVE TSHWETE LM | 23 AUG - EMAKHAZENI LM

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